



CHAPTER SIXTEEN
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GUIDE TO DRESS PROTOCOLS

16.1 Introduction

Until recent times New Zealanders have received British honours, awards and medals bestowed by the Sovereign. Regulations detail the protocol on how, where and when honours, awards and medals were to be worn. It was also an offence to wear honours, awards and medals of which the wearer was not the recipient. New Zealand has withdrawn from using the British Honours system and now bestows National Honours, Awards and Medals.

Some New Zealand servicemen have participated in duties outside New Zealand for which they have received medals issued by other Nations, but which are not officially recognised by New Zealand. There are now a large, and ever increasing, number of unofficial commemorative and remembrance medals being minted, often privately purchased, and worn by ex-service personnel.

This Guide to Dress Protocols outlines the correct procedures on where officially recognised honours, awards and medals should be worn. It also covers the wearing of medals not officially recognised, the wearing of the Poppy and the RSA Badge. These protocols should be followed by all members when either attending RSA occasions or representing the RSA. For members who are not ex-New Zealand service personnel, Honours, Awards and Medals officially recognised by the recipient's own Nation should be worn in the manner and precedence as regulated by their home country. However, the protocols covering all other Honours, Awards, Medals, the Poppy and the RSA Badge still apply to RSA members regardless of their nationality.

16.2 Official Honours, Awards and Medals

This protocol covers the former British and National Honours, Awards and Medals plus Foreign Awards that are officially recognised. There is a strict order of precedence, and the honours related have to be dealt with in that order as far as possible. This precedence conditions the order of wearing medals starting from almost the middle of the breast and moving outwards to the left. Medals with ribbons may overlap but, when ribbons alone are worn they are placed edge to edge and not more than five can normally be in a row. If more than five ribbons are worn, they are in rows so that from a facing view, you read across and down for the order of precedence. Foreign medals, or their ribbons, are worn after those bestowed by the Crown or New Zealand. Only the recipient is entitled to wear the Honours, Awards and Medals on the left breast.

16.3 All Other Honours, Awards and Medals

This protocol covers Honours, Awards or Medals that are not officially recognised and therefore do not qualify to be worn on the left breast. It also covers the wearing of Official Honours, Awards and Medals when worn by a non-recipient, such as a family member in honour of a deceased recipient, on commemorative occasions such as ANZAC Day. The same order of precedence conditions the order of the wearing officially recognised medals, but starting from the right side and moving inwards across the right breast. As all other Honours, Awards and Medals are not officially recognised no order of precedence is conditioned, but they are worn on the right breast.

16.4 The Poppy

The poppy should be worn on the left breast above any medals, or on the left lapel.

16.5 RSA Badge

The Badge is to be worn on the right breast or right lapel and when attending an RSA occasion, or representing the RSA, in precedence, above any other badge being worn.

16.6 Headgear — Wearing Of

NEC Agenda Item 10 on 28 — 30 April 2008 refers. Circular No 4306 May 2008 also refers.

"RNZRSA President's Forum Resolved

That RNZRSA President's Forum is of the view that although the rules that require males not to wear headgear inside RSA premises are well-based and proper, occasions can arise where broader interpretation is required. For example, a member might be disfigured or subject to a medical procedure that changes his appearance temporarily in such a way that embarrassment would limit normal social intercourse unless mitigated by some form of head covering.

In those circumstances it would be more of an affront to our basic goals of care for people to refuse a member entry on account of a hat, than to allow it. Obviously, however, Associations are entitled to know that the privilege is extended responsibly and for good reason. It is therefore a requirement, that special permission to wear headgear is sought from a designated Executive Committee Member or Representative; consideration of the particular nature of the headgear proposed might also be necessary.

In all cases, however, it would be expected that the decision would be taken with practicality and compassion in mind; and in any case best endeavours should be made to ensure that Association membership is aware that permission has been sought, and given.

Women may wear a hat in a local Association's facilities if it is part of a uniform or formal dress, but otherwise are subject to the same rules and standards as men."